

June 3, 1999

His Excellency, Lincoln Almond  
Governor  
State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations  
State House  
Room 222  
Providence, RI 02903-1196

Dear Governor Almond:

As you directed, this morning the Rhode Island Coin Concept Selection Advisory panel met at the offices of the Rhode Island State Council on the Arts to review concepts for the Rhode Island quarter. We were joined in person by Senator Chafee and three senior representatives of the U.S. Mint, and by phone with other representatives of the Mint. Based on our discussions, here are four concepts that the Advisory panel sends for your review and approval:

**A depiction of Roger Williams:** the panel suggested that Roger Williams, founder of Rhode Island, would be a very appropriate visual image. There could be a water reference (Roger Williams is often depicted in a boat), and a reference to our Native American population (Roger Williams reaching out to a Native American). Text accompanying this image could be "religious tolerance" or "religious freedom". This also sets our state in a colonial frame of reference. We should look for different or unusual images.

**Bay or Ocean scenes or vistas:** the panel suggested depictions of the Ocean or Narragansett Bay that were appropriate and not cliché-ish. Historic ships like the Hannah or the Gaspee could be represented. Fishing boats could be represented, but sailboats on the Bay might be an over-used image.

**Gilbert Stuart, artist who produced the most famous portraits of George Washington:** the panel suggested that an historical figure be represented on the quarter. Gilbert Stuart was chosen as one who was familiar to a number of Americans. The panel liked the irony of representing the artist whose work is best depicted on American money, and liked the unique notion of representing an artists on a coin. They suggested a depiction of Stuart painting or holding a palette.

**A text-based presentation:** the panel felt that what makes Rhode Island unique is that it is a state founded upon ideas. Those ideas are best represented by words, so the panel recommended a text-based image, similar to the dramatic carvings found on many of our national monuments. (Many of those carvings were done by John Howard Benson of Newport early this century: the tradition has stayed in the family with John Benson having most recently carved the words at the FDR Memorial in Washington, ergo a Rhode Island connection). This can be a powerful presentation, and unique among the other state's quarters. The words can be viewed as images, set against background images familiar to Rhode Islanders, like an anchor. The term "A Lively Experiment" can lead into representations of words like "Hope", "Tolerance" and "Freedom", in a form/counter-form between the images.

These recommendations are provided for your review and approval. As you know, the Secretary of the Treasury should receive our from three to five concepts from Rhode Island by June 22, 1999, in a letter from you. We can assist your office, as you wish, in the gathering of support material to accompany this letter.

Thank you and your staff for the trust you have placed upon us to manage this effort. We look forward to assisting as this process unfolds over the next several months.

Sincerely,

Randall Rosenbaum  
Executive Director